

Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

A Faith which Worketh by Love

WAIT AND MURMUR NOT

SYMPATHY

OUR OWN SUCCESS STORY—YOURS, MINE

THE VAULT OF THE MIND

THE POWER OF SELF-DISCIPLINE

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

HAPPINESS AND JOY

Megiddo Message

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Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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And practice doing good,
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Crystal Beach, Fla.

Sister L. S.

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Dear Maranatha Sister,

Truly God will not accept any half-way travelers in this difficult and restricted way of absolute self-denial. The total prize will go only to those whose "all on the altar of sacrifice has been laid," honestly and sincerely, with no thought of preserving any of the tendencies of the natural man.

The guiding principles laid down to instruct along the upward climb require a positive approach; the quicker we acquaint ourselves with the law and apply to our individual selves, the faster we will make progress. To be sure every beginner did experience getting off to the side of the road by some mistake, but he need not stop there. After this, losing no time loitering and lamenting, each traveler is required to get hold of himself and quickly arise, by building high heaps along the tender spots and go up the rest of the way, firmly and decisively.

We must keep an eagle eye on self, if we are to win in this race for life eternal, for the propensities of the flesh man are many and cunning. It does not take much to sidetrack. One word spoken in haste, one glance or a nod in the wrong direction and we are off. Oh! for a God given ability and determination to keep at the old man until he lies completely dead at our feet.

South Amboy, N. J.

L. M. K.

A Faith which Worketh by Love

A GREAT MANY bewildered people have asserted that the apostle Paul was in violent theological conflict with the apostle James. For he seems to say, they assert, that a man can be justified by faith only, and without works at all. While James says that "faith without works is dead" (2: 20); that a man may be justified by works, and not in every case is he justified by faith only.

Now, all truth is consistent. These inspired men never came into conflict in their views pertaining to salvation. Their strong language must be interpreted with some intelligible limitation in order to avoid even seeming contradiction. Paul, a man consistent in his manner of life early besought his Corinthian brethren to speak, and teach and live in unity, oneness of mind. James may have been writing for a class of people in his day who had been wont to dwell overmuch on the more spiritual features of religion, and so forget the more practical. He, therefore, intends through all his epistle to bring into prominence the necessity of living up to one's professions of piety, even minor moralities. Paul, on the other hand, writing to a very different class of people, who were continually in danger of throwing their whole dependence upon a pharisaical performance of mere niceties of outward duty required by law, was constrained to turn the force of his address more directly upon deep spiritual truths, regarding true piety, and give them new pictures of heart-service in the inner life. However, much that Paul said was figurative, and should not be taken literally at all.

Hence the entire statements of both these men are right. True religion is not a faith distinct from works, nor works separate from a faith. It includes and demands each of these, and both at once.

Three Essentials to Christian Life

It will be readily accepted, then, when one urges that every true life needs these two elements; but it might give some surprise to assert in the same breath that yet there is necessary something quite beyond both faith and works for the completion of the whole pattern set before us in Christ.

Personal religion consists of *three* things in one. There is in it a form of intelligence, first; then there is in it a form of activity; then there is in it a form of feeling. Hence it covers in each case the whole manhood—the head, the hand, and the heart.

Quite frequently the word of God speaks of one of these elements as if it embraced all the rest. For example Jesus' words, "when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Texts can even be found in which two of them are put in place of the three. Once, at least, in the Old Testament are they all three included. David gave this as dying counsel for his son: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." Here we find all elements assumed:

"know" God, and "serve" him with "a perfect heart." That is, true piety demands a creed, a work, and a sentiment.

In the New Testament, also, we find one fragment of a verse so appropriate and terse that it might well become a motto for Christian living: "Faith which worketh by love." All three elements are included here likewise—intelligence, activity, and affection.

Faith

Unfortunately for absolute clearness, the word "faith" has been used in the Bible somewhat ambiguously. It does not seem that we are to understand James as referring to a creed only, when he puts the sharp question, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" But certainly he does not refer to an experience only. Perhaps it would be safe to say that he uses the term generically, and seeks to include *trust* as a living bond of union to Christ, and *belief* as an instrument for the intelligent apprehension of truth in its due relations.

At any rate, to be an intelligent believer, each man must have a faith founded on facts. He must know and believe that there is a God; and he must understand His character as a just, as well as a beneficent Being; then he must become acquainted with God's law, as holy and decisive, reaching to the inmost intents of the heart. These must be known as fundamental truths under the gospel; then they must be believed, and that is *faith*.

Faith Must Work

Hence, next to this comes activity: faith must "work." The earliest impulse of a Word-enlightened soul is that of the converted apostle: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" We have duties to do which involve worship of God and a complete dedication to His service, favors for men, and improvement of a spiritual life in ourselves; these demand energy and zeal. We are to keep up a filial communication with God as exemplified by holy men of old (Ps. 55: 17; Dan. 6: 10; Luke 18: 1). Then we are bidden to seek our neighbor's good: giving a warm hand and a sympathetic ear to every voice of human sorrow, every call of human need. We are to bless others as we ourselves have been blessed.

Furthermore we owe our own selves something. We are bound to grow in grace; and that implies study, discipline, and cultivation. With all these, we must guard against contamination of worldliness. We must be in the world but not of it. It is as if saints were daily dressed in whitest raiment, and were forced to pass through the dinginess and dust of a defiled roadway. We are to keep these garments of grace fastidiously pure; to protect them against the falling particles of dirt and drifting ashes. Hence we come back exactly to another verse of James, which may go alongside of Paul's motto. Faith working by love is pure religion; and "Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world." The third strong strand making this a threefold cord is that meaningful petition

of our Master in His soul's earnest prayer on that last eventful night, not to take His disciples out of the world, but that "thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Their garments should be unsullied and free from contamination.

Faith and Works—Plus

Now, I am persuaded that the link between these two elements, faith and works, is found in that other element, *feeling*. Faith alone is not enough. Faith working is not enough. Faith is to *continue working by love*. And that is enough, simply because it is all there is of it. There must be some sensibility, some tenderness, some emotion, some mellowness of heart, in all personal religion, or it will be chill and lifeless and ineffective. It will neither honor God, nor win men, nor fit us for salvation. This must be what James means when he says, "faith without works is dead." And it all grows easy to understand, if we go right along in order. Faith is necessary to salvation, and works are necessary to faith; hence works are necessary to salvation; for faith without works would be defective, ineffectual, lifeless.

It would seem as if a true Christian could not possibly live a moment without experiencing the promptings of these new feelings within. Satisfied that God is faithful, and that Christ will be true to His Word, the believer must imbibe his Master's spirit. All his powers are reduced to obedience to law, and are working under rules of harmony and oneness with God.

It seems almost inconceivable, therefore, that anybody should try to cherish a faith which is all intellectuality, or an activity which is all bustle, or a love which is all gushing. For the symmetry of true religion is its most noble characteristic. Such a man as it necessitates will be all the more a *man* because of its possession.

It is wicked for men to "pervert piety into pressure, and turn grace into grip," or transform a "faith that worketh by love" into bland and lifeless belief. Pure sweet sunshine in the grape vineyard was never intended to dry up and harden the vines into wire, as if their whole autumn work consisted in climbing a trellis or strangling a tree. It is meant to swell out fresh buds and broaden new branches; to warm up the leaves and render more succulent the tendrils; and by and by, in the time thereof, to kindle the clusters with luminous purple, and transform their mysterious juices into sweetest nectar. And the same is true in the Christian's life. He needs and must have a faith that worketh by love.

Some Expressive Examples

Let us look now for a picture that will exhibit results, as this true religion pushes itself out into realization. What shall be our simile? What sort of life would that be which mingles in proper proportion faith and works, and makes faith work by love?

Let us suppose a sailor on the beach seeking to bring ashore passengers from a wrecked ship. He is protected by a rope fastened around his wrist, and held firmly by someone behind him.

Let us imagine a miner at the edge of a shaft, determined to rescue some of his comrades down underground, stifling in the fire-damp. He bends over the awful chasm safely, for there is a rope under his armpits, which is fastened securely to the windlass behind.

Let us think of a fireman upon a ladder, from which he

seeks to be swung over into the window of a blazing house, in order just to snatch a child out of the flames before they mount to the attic. He is girded by a rope, held by the people behind him on the neighboring roof, so as to keep him in case the floor collapses.

Simple pictures all of these, the peculiarities of which are the same—a dangerous service and a secured help. You see how we must insist upon the *rope* as the main thing to start with.

This is the *faith* we have been talking about. In all spiritual exposures the Christian relies on a strength not his own. Every human being that goes forth in an effort to save a soul from death can feel himself held in the grip of a will that is not his own, God is behind him. And the simple difference between Christian life and all other life lies in this—a Christian life exists, acts, and grows, entirely by a living, working faith.

With this hint, we can easily go on with the analysis of the motto. *Works* come next to faith; the mere glance at our picture will tell us where those enter. The sailor stands on the beach-rock, the miner stands on the shaft-edge, the fireman stands on the ladder-rung; but standing is not working. What would you have these people do? You answer promptly. Let the sailor forget himself, trust to the rope, plunge into the water, and every instant catch hold of some new swimmer struggling in his agony. Let that miner set loose the clog on the windlass, trust the rope, and rattle down into the depths with a leap for life from ledge to ledge, looking for smothering men. Let that fireman wait not a moment, but trust the rope, spring through the shivered glass of the bedroom window, and be off on his errand in the smoke. No time is to be lost. It is no boy's play this! nor is a working faith, boy's play.

And then comes the *love*—oh, word of inexhaustible meaning! That demands tenderness and anxiety, brave deed, and cool purpose. Look over our picture again. Our sailor, our miner, our fireman, all were actuated by a love for their fellow creatures, else they would not have risked their own lives to save them. We too must be actuated by the same virtue, ours must be a faith that worketh by love. If we love our brother we will do everything within our power to help him. We will speak the word that will infuse faith into him, and carefully guard against any word or attitude that would weaken his faith. We will try to show him the example that will inspire in him a desire to do right, letting our light so shine before him that he may see our good works, and be encouraged himself to do right.

Then another facet to love, the word of inexhaustible meaning, is the keeping of the commandments of God. If we truly possess the faith that works by love we will demonstrate it by doing all that God commands. The child who truly loves its parents obeys them out of love for them. The Almighty God employs this same power of attraction to draw us to Him. It is His "goodness" that leads us to "repentance" (Rom. 2:4). Speaking through the prophet Hosea God says: "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hos. 11:4).

Do we desire future life with a desire so strong that nothing can dull our keen desire to obtain it? Is our love for God who has offered us this incomparable boon so strong that once we know a thing is a divine command we will fly to obey it? If this be the case, then we truly possess that faith which works by love, and will demonstrate it by subduing our lower nature.

Wait and Murmur not

THE SIGNIFICANCE of waiting is remaining in readiness for the proper or favorable time for action, or looking for the arrival of some person or event. Periods of waiting may be long or short according to circumstances. Waiting requires patience and the power and determination to continue unwaveringly till the expectation becomes realization. To wait is foreign to the human desires and longings and quite often there are those who worry and fret at what appears a prolonged delay; others become restive and weary and give up in despair. Many times unforeseen circumstances thwart the hopes, and waiting is found to be in vain. Such often is the tendency of things temporal; today we wait for that which vanishes tomorrow.

God, in His dealings with His people, oftentimes required them to wait, thus putting their faith to the extreme test. We recall the time when Moses and his minister, Joshua, at divine bidding went up into the Mount of God. Moses' departing message to the elders was to "Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have matters to do, let him come unto them." Having provided for the welfare of his followers, Moses went up in the mount and the mount was covered with a cloud. The glory of the Lord abode on the mount and the sight of that glory was "like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." Before forty days had been spent, the impression of the glory they had seen, the miracle of their recent deliverance and the admonition of their leader faded from memory and, that they might feel justified in departing from the Lord, they began to rationalize: "as for this man Moses that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him." Their faith waned, they wearied of waiting and resorted to idol worship, bringing upon themselves the plague of the Lord.

Many centuries later the disciples at the ascension of Jesus were comforted by the promise of the angels that He would come again, and in Heb. 9:28, we are assured that to those, who look for Him the second time, will He appear without sin unto salvation. This is the Father's promise to His children and we are told that His promises are "Yea" and "Amen." A writer once said, "Every divine promise is built upon four pillars: God's justice or holiness which will not suffer Him to deceive; His grace or goodness which will not suffer Him to forget; His truth which will not suffer Him to change, and His power which makes Him able to accomplish." Could any promise be more binding, more secure, more "great and precious"?

Truly "great and precious" are His promises and in such we can place the utmost confidence. And what a precious assurance is the promise of our Lord's return! Like Joseph of Arimathea, we are waiting for the kingdom of the Lord, for we know He will return though we know not the day nor the hour when He shall appear. May our watchfulness be so eager and intent that our faith will not be exposed to the inroads of doubt and distrust. Let us heed the admonition of Paul in I Cor. 16:13 "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." Far be it from us to murmur or complain

or become scoffers, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning. We must not 'grumble as some of them did, for they were destroyed for it by the destroying angel. These things happened to them as a warning to others, but they were written down to instruct us, in whose days the ages have reached their climax' (American Trans.).

Shall we receive this divine instruction or will it fall on ears dull of hearing and we forfeit the reward of becoming partakers of the inheritance of the saints because we gave way to murmuring? Hearken to the warning given in Heb. 10:35-37, "Don't throw away your trust now—it carries with it a rich reward in the world to come. Patient endurance is what you need if, after doing God's will, you are to receive what He has promised. For yet a little while, He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry" (Phillips).

While waiting our time will be fully occupied, for we will be busily engaged in watching: watching that we keep the tension tight, watching that we "lose not those things which we have wrought"; watching that we be ready, for it can never be truly said we are waiting unless or until ready. Only those who are ready when the Bridegroom comes will go in with Him to the marriage. And the door will shut.

The pertinent question is:

"Will He find us watching,
Waiting for that hour;
Ready to embark with Him,
For the eternal shore?"

Not unless we wait—and murmur not.



The Lesson of Trust

I've learned as days have passed me,
Fretting never lifts the load;
And that worry, much or little,
Never smooths an irksome road;
For you know that, somehow, always,
Doors are opened—ways are made,
When we work and live in patience,
Under all the cross that's laid.

He who waters meadow lilies,
With the dew from out the sky,
He who feeds the flitting sparrows,
When in need for food they cry,
Never fails to help His children,
In all things, both great and small;
For His ear is ever open,
To our faintest far off call.

So take up the duty nearest,
Trust and do your very best,
And you'll learn that priceless lesson,
How to leave with God the rest,
And in this, as I have found it,
You will find from care release,
And in trusting, what you're needing,
God's rich gift of perfect peace.

Sympathy

"SYMPATHY is a drug. It weakens people—makes them pity themselves." These striking and somewhat iconoclastic words are from the pen of a well-known columnist in a daily newspaper, and how very true they are. Not that sympathy in and of itself is bad, but the improper use of a legitimate emotion, a misguided sympathy rather than that educated by the spirit, can be and is a monstrous evil. A drug may be a curse to the addict or habitual user, but a saver of life when administered with due care, at the proper time, in the proper amount and combination, by a competent and qualified person.

In the closely knit body of Christ (I Cor. 12: 27), godly sympathy has a large place. When one member suffers or rejoices, all the members suffer or rejoice with it. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep," is a direct and definite command. God has no place for the man or woman who cannot feel the sufferings of others, or who would selfishly withhold a word of sympathy when it is "indicated." But—just what should that word be? This question calls for the utmost delicacy and skill in dividing the wise from the unwise. For a truly sympathetic word is that which strengthens and inspires to self-help; anything else is maudlin and misguided.

For generations the teachings of man have led us to exalt the emotion which extends sympathy to the unfortunate indiscriminately, worthy or unworthy. We justify ourselves in this attitude by thinking that perhaps we would do no better than the unworthy one if in his place. But this is not God's way. His thoughts and ways, in this as in everything, are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. Right is right and wrong is wrong, and there are no gradations or connecting links between the two. "He that justifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord."

All students of the Gospels are aware that Jesus our Example possessed a nature warm, compassionate, sympathetic. We read that He was moved with compassion for the multitude, seeing them as sheep without a shepherd. But when He showed them true practical sympathy by offering them life through the narrow path of obedience, when He stood uncompromisingly for right and truth and cried out against their evil ways, they cared little for that brand of sympathy, and their cries of "Hosanna!" changed to "Crucify him!"

Let us go to the Record for an example of how Jesus, in individual cases, applied sympathy in a really helpful way. A very energetic sister, His hostess at the time, once appealed to Him when she thought she was being neglected. Now Jesus was nothing if not practical, and here was a perfect setting for a sympathetic reaction of two practical minds. But what really happened? Did He say, "Martha, it is just too bad; you are being imposed upon, and Mary is not doing her duty"? Far from it; He was too practical for that. His answer to her was a rebuke for her own neglect of the better things, a restatement of the eternal truth that "man shall not live by bread alone," that the things of the spirit are the more important

because they bring an eternal reward. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Thus was the self-pitying Martha taught an abiding lesson in the proper estimation of temporal and spiritual values. She was shown that her abundant energy was misdirected and that her great need lay in another direction.

On another occasion we note His wisdom in dealing with a wealthy, self-satisfied young man who no doubt, expected to be told that he was doing all that could be expected of him. Instead of gratifying his desire for a spiritual pat on the back, Jesus promptly showed him what he lacked. He had asked for a true diagnosis, but the answer was manifestly disappointing, for we read that "he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions" of a temporal nature, but was sadly lacking in the true riches. How much finer it was for our great Example to show this young person his need and give him an opportunity to make good with the means entrusted to him than to tell him that he was doing well, all that was necessary if he had kept all the commandments that he knew. True sympathy will always encourage and uplift. If such appeals as these are dealt with according to the natural mind, the great opportunity for helping another has been lost and not only they but we are made poorer and weaker by the experience.

When we begin to feel the urge to self-pity we should have a talk with the dauntless Paul. Dull indeed is he who can read the history of this adventurous life without a lift of the heart and a squaring of the shoulders. Here was a man who could take the buffetings of fate in his stride, esteeming the persecutions and inconveniences as spiritual exercises rather than trials. In prison, in chains, before judges, before kings, before mobs, he invariably and naturally took the initiative, driving his captors and tormentors to the defensive. A true leader—always out in front.

No one can read Second Corinthians or Timothy or Philemon and doubt that Paul, like his Master, had a nature overflowing with warmth and sympathy, emotions which he, following his Pattern, learned to control and direct into paths of helpfulness. Yet for all his depth of feeling he asked no sentimental sympathy for himself. Respect and obedience, which was his due as a spiritual father, he required; but sympathy—he was too busy "rejoicing in hope" and living for others to give it a thought.

Philippi showed the true measure of the man. Cast into prison with his feet made fast in the stocks, his back bruised and torn by Roman scourges, yet he could, with his brave companion Silas, sing praises to God at midnight, witnessing to their faith in the only way left them. And after their release from prison, we are told that "they entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." It is just what we have learned to expect from true nobility. It would seem that they were the ones needing comfort, but we read of no word of complaint

from these strong men. A superabundant faith, a glowing zeal, an outflowing, controlled, directed sympathy, lifted them above the masses and gave them an eternal place on history's fairest page. Persecutions which would break the heart of an ordinary man were to Paul light afflictions, but for a moment, which would work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Oh, if we would only keep in view the things which are not seen, the eternal things, as did Paul, we would never feel any occasion for fleshly sympathy or self-pity. It was for the joy set before Him that Jesus could endure the daily cross of self-denial and meet a cruel death, praising God for a speedy deliverance when the shadow of death crept over Him. And this joy, this faith, is the only means that will enable us to meet our little trials—large enough for our small souls—with courage, rise above them, crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and come off more than a conqueror.

Our Own Success Story-- Yours, Mine

AS AN EXAMPLE of those who show great diligence and perseverance, even though they know not the promises of God, we think of a certain British scientist and his relentless search for the cause of malaria fever. This was years ago in far away India. One very hot, sweltering day, this man sat impatiently studying some small, whitish objects through his microscope. He had been there long that day and many days before. His quest was a serious one, and of great significance to humanity.

For centuries, mankind had suffered from a peculiar form of chill, headache and fever which came to be known as malaria. It was formerly supposed to have its origin in poisonous mists and vapors arising from swamps and marshes. Long before this particular day, however, scientists had come to the conclusion that it was not caused by vapors from the swamps, but by the mosquitoes carrying the parasite which caused malaria. Yet no one had proved this theory and now this scientist sat before a mound of cells from the stomachs of the suspected anopheles mosquito. One by one he had been examining the tiny cells, hoping to find in one of them the dangerous malarial parasite.

He was tired and discouraged. There were many tedious moments of work ahead of him if he were to examine the entire number of cells before him. For the hundredth time, he asked himself if it were worth going on, but something within urged him on, and in the very next cell was the object of his search.

Stories such as this could be multiplied of individuals who, refusing to listen to the voice of discouragement, have courageously persevered to the desired goal. The spirit that brought them through was, no matter how many failures, I WILL TRY AGAIN. As a result, mankind today are enjoying inestimable blessings not dreamed of even fifty years ago. And so the fight goes

on. All these persons work untiringly to climb the pinnacle of fame for a few short years and at the end, at best, a piece of marble marks their eternal resting place.

But how different with God's spiritual scientists, if they carry their great work through to a successful finish. Their reward will be millions, yes, billions of times greater than man could bestow, and it will never pass away, but instead will increase throughout the endless ages of eternity. Every spiritual scientist must search relentlessly and diligently with the microscope of Holy Writ to seek out every evil and besetting sin lurking within the heart of his own being. This will take long hours, days, weeks, even years. We cannot become discouraged in our search, cannot become "weary in well-doing, and if we fall, we must get right up and start afresh, for who knows, perhaps this will be the last time that we will ever fall because of that particular fault, or sin. Every sin that we overcome will give us that much more strength to overcome others. We *must* fight on.

Our quest is a serious one, for life is at stake, eternal life, and no one can do the seeking for us. We have to observe the injunction given the Philippian brethren, "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." We must fear and tremble lest we miss the prize, and never once question the worthwhileness of our effort, for we know that the promises of God are sure.

Usually the world's men of renown strive for the praise and acclaim of their fellow men, while our work is in secret and silence, carving, and shaping with the Master's tools, to prepare a stone for God's building. While they improve living and health conditions for themselves and others, we must better self in order to enjoy those perfect conditions to come when Christ is King.

But now comes the most important factor in this quest and this is FAITH, for "without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). Here again we run into the subject of "diligence." Paul said that we must "diligently seek." We have only to look around us and see the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in these last days to give us faith, but the diligence comes only by a constant pressing and "continuance in well doing." And for those who thus persevere, who succeed in seeking immortality through weariness and watching, who remain "not faithless but believing," success shall crown their efforts.

Of Him who is able to perform, it is written "who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by *patient continuance in well doing seek* for glory and honor and immortality, ETERNAL LIFE." Success at last—glorious, never ending, shall be the crowning reward.

"Life is what we make it." And we must make our life over by obeying the law of the Lord. If we are dissatisfied with today's success, we should remember that it is the harvest from yesterday's sowing. "Make no mistake" said Paul, "God is not to be mocked—a man will reap just what he sows; he who sows for his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, and he who sows for the spirit will reap the life eternal from the spirit. Never let us grow tired of doing what is right, for if we do not faint we shall reap our harvest at the opportune season" (Gal. 6:7—9 Moffatt).

The Vault of the Mind

A VAULT IS generally considered to be a secure place for storing objects of value, to protect them from thieves or other agents of destruction, such as fire and water. In olden times men of wealth often hid their riches in subterranean vaults; even today most things of importance are put into vaults called safes.

In many ways, the human mind is like a vault into which we put our treasure-thoughts. No human eye can penetrate the depths of this mental cavern, no mortal hands can pry open the door to see what secrets we have hidden there. So it appears that we have no need to worry about others finding out what thoughts we fondle in the dark recesses of our minds. Thus we can safely use our minds as we please; after all—are they not our own? But stop and consider a moment: We as Christians have promised to use our all in the service of the Lord, and this includes the way we think.

The Wise Man says "as he thinketh in his heart so is he." Jesus also verifies this in Luke 6: 45, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." So it is by our words and acts we often betray the motives we wish to keep hidden, sometimes a single word reveals a whole page. It is by these acts, the fruits of our minds, that others judge us, for the command is to judge only by fruits.

When we have done wrong, often the first thought is what will our fellowmen think, forgetting the most important One. There is One who does not need to observe our actions to know what we are thinking, what forbidden memories we are cherishing. He, the all powerful One, even God who gave us our minds to use in His service, can read every thought, good or evil. He knows, also, whether we banish the evil thoughts or preserve them. His recording angel is faithfully keeping a record of our every act and thought, so it behooves us to act and think aright.

A man who maintains a vault at the bank, puts into it whatever he wishes to save, be it a sea shell or a bag of gold; but we must be constantly alert as to the way we are using our mental vault, for at Judgment Day we shall have to give account of the way we have used it; for it is not our own, it was only loaned to us by our generous Eternal Father.

It is an accepted fact that two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time, and the same is true of the mind, it cannot give first place to two interests. There is but one first place. Thus in order to have high elevating thoughts we must remove the accumulated rubbish and superstition. Our mental storehouse must be swept clean—not just generally—but in every crevice and corner, and the resultant space actually crowded with God's thoughts, in order to force out—not only most of, but—all that is *un-godly*. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55: 8, 9).

Jesus tells of a jewel that all Christians should have in their treasure chest, the "pearl of great price" (Matt.

13: 46). To get this one object of true value we have to sell all that we have, sell out all our own ways, opinions, and purposes that we may have full place in our heart and life for holiness and its attendant virtues. By so doing we will not only buy for ourselves lasting riches, but make space in our vault to place them. For in divesting ourselves of carnal thoughts we have made available space to store bright, pure, noble, uplifting and joyous thoughts—thoughts that generate Christian energy and which multiply Christian graces.

Of what use to us would be a bushel of gold if we could not use it to buy something that we want or need? Silver and gold will not buy a place in the soon coming kingdom, but this one priceless pearl will purchase an entrance through the celestial gates. So let us make haste and dispose of all worthless dross, and fill the vault of our minds with those treasures that are incorruptible and everlasting.

"There is dew in one flower and not in another, because one opens its cup to take it in, while the other closes itself and the drops run off. God rains His goodness and mercy as wide-spread as the dew, and if we lack them, it is because we will not open our hearts to receive them."

The error of the past is the success of the future. A mistake is evidence that someone tried to do something. If we will only admit our mistakes, we will grow thereby.

A smile is nothing more than a curve that sets a lot of things straight.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (cont.)

(Continued from page 11)

that time had accomplished the heavenward journey: "No man hath ascended up into heaven." And there is not a shred of proof that any man or woman has ascended since.

Under the Mosaic arrangement, which was a type, only the high priest could enter the most holy place. It would be death for anyone else to enter. Christ our High Priest has entered heaven itself, the real most holy place (Heb. 4: 14; 7: 26), and it would be death for anyone else to attempt to enter.

The divine plan is that all shall be judged before being rewarded. II Cor. 5: 10; Matt. 16: 27; Rev. 22: 12 point this out sharply.

Again: All covenant-makers are to be rewarded together at the last day, not piece-meal as would be the case if each received his reward at death. II Tim. 4: 8 is clear on this, also Hebrews 11. This chapter of Hebrews enumerates a long list of righteous ones who had lived and died over the ages, and not one of them had yet received their reward. Observe 39 and 40: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received *not* the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The Power of Self-Discipline

SAINT PAUL, one of our most notable examples of Christian conquest of mind and being, said he disciplined his body and brought it into subjection, lest that after he had preached to others, he might lose his own soul (I Cor. 9:27). Part of the discipline which he administered to his physical nature was frequent fasting (II Cor. 5:5; 11:27), which has always been a Bible principle. There was nothing of the self-made martyr or the monastic in Paul, but he knew, as every son of God knows, that spiritual growth and an uncontrolled appetite, whether for food or any other physical gratification, are incompatible. The body is not an enemy, but an opportunity, if it be kept in its place. The donkey is useful as a bearer of burdens, but is unthinkable as a ruler. Just so the body is a good servant, but a very bad master unless controlled.

Untried confidence in our own strength is dangerous. It was our founder who once said, "How do you know you can rule your appetite unless you try?" We all have seen or heard of the drunkard who continually boasts that he can take it or let it alone, but somehow he never lets it alone. When a habit or inclination gets the upper hand of us to the extent that we make excuses or justifications for it, that is evidence that we need to take it in hand at once, to see who is master. For the Christ-life is first, control; second, control; third, control. "Even Christ pleased not himself" but suffered, "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps."

All this self-discipline must have an object, or it is a waste of effort. Unless some great good comes of it, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." There is, of course, the inward strength and peace which comes with self-mastery. But it goes deeper. We are in training for high position in the Kingdom of God soon to come, to sit with Jesus on His throne (Rev. 3:21). No man is qualified to rule others unless he can rule himself. And the appetite is a good place to start. It may be only one thing, but it is not a small thing.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Unless the work of overcoming is pushed daily, never missing a day, our life becomes a see-saw affair, and we fail to hold our gains. An annual observance is merely a reminder, a bit of concentrated training, a springboard to greater victories. So it is a good practice, and one followed by our founder, to do a little extra—to deliberately deny ourselves something we like, something we could lawfully have, every day, just to show that we are ruling our appetite instead of being ruled by it.

In attaining complete self-control we are not losing, but gaining, our lives becoming broader instead of narrower. Our self-denial is not of the negative, Oriental variety, renunciation for its own sake which reduces man to the level of the vegetable kingdom, but a redirection or focusing of energy. For, make no mistake about it, the world—this world and that to come—belongs to the

self-denying, to the men who are able and willing to say no to themselves on a lower level so that they may have more with which to say yes on the higher. The self-indulgent are remembered in history usually with loathing; the men who have left their mark for good in the world are invariably men who were to an uncommon degree masters of themselves.

To cite a Biblical example, the names of Daniel and his three friends, who in their youth refused to be conquered by the soft luxury of Babylon, even at the table, shine like stars in the murk of history, not only as men faithful to their God but as men fit for high position in this life. Of their companions who compromised with heathendom for the sake of their appetites, there is not a word.

The narrow gate of self-control always opens into broader spaces, into a far more abundant life than the self-indulgent can ever know. Slavery to self is a bitter bondage.

Will this abundant life be ours? Is it ours now? If not, why not? Without exception, the thing that stands in our way is the old self-life, demanding its own undisciplined way. To rid ourselves of this unwholesome thing is a prolonged, grave and often painful operation, but it is the only road to present and future happiness. Let us then welcome any law, any ordinance, any custom, which will help us to gain the mastery over self. Let us not be content with the letter, but enter into the spirit of the thing, willing to volunteer the second mile, if only we may be overcomers.

Self-Denial Week

The week beginning Sunday, February 7, has been set apart for the observance of self-denial by the Megiddo Mission Church, and for all others scattered abroad who may wish to observe it with us.

This fast week has been a custom among the people of the Mission for many years; having been instituted by the founder, the late Rev. L. T. Nichols.

As a potent means of gaining control of the appetite and bringing the body into subjection to divine law, no surer method has been discovered than fasting, prayer, and self-denial. But it must be done to the Lord, and be a denial that is felt. It is well to remember that there is always danger of overeating; therefore let us control the appetite.

During this week, Feb. 7—13, only three articles of food are to be eaten at any one meal, but the variety may be changed at each meal if desired. No meat, fish, fowl, eggs, cheese, cake, puddings or pastries are on the bill of fare; but fruits, fresh or canned, vegetables (seasoning included), bread, butter, cereals, and milk, may be eaten freely. Exception is made for the aged and those under the care of a physician or on special diets.

When we consider the denial and hardship that is the lot of the soldier who fights for the cause of liberty, how small indeed is the above-mentioned sacrifice! Let us enter into this mastery over self with heartfelt thanksgiving and with an earnest desire to attain real spiritual growth to the stature of true soldiers of God.

Meditations

On the Word

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (Hosea 12: 6).

The action demanded by these words is quite the reverse of the trend of human nature. "Turn thou to thy God: . . . and wait on thy God continually." When distress or anguish come upon us, when we think the ship is about to sink, when devastation strikes, when we are about to undergo a serious surgical operation, or the shadow of death falls visibly across our path, it then is easy for us to call upon God as a last resort. But to wait upon our God continually means the giving up of enjoyable pastimes and sinful pleasures which to our untrained mind may seem harmless and legitimate, yet are not to His glory; the breaking away from congenial associates when our better self perceives that such associations will adversely affect our spiritual progress; the giving up of temporal gain in order that we may have something laid up in store for the "morrow"—"the dawn of prosperity and happiness" (Zeph. 3: 3, original); the complete surrender of our own will to the will of Him upon whom we wait continually.

In these days of highway travel we are all more or less familiar with "turns," right-hand turns, left-hand turns, reverse or "U" turns, and to take any one of these turns of necessity changes our direction of travel. To turn to God with our whole heart and no longer make any provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof is also a change of direction of travel, and so complete a change as to be described as a reverse turn. To make such a turn we must right-about-face and go in exactly the opposite direction to what we formerly traveled. We cannot retain a single way or thought of our own, nor carry over one evil habit from our past life. We cannot look at things as once we would have looked at them, but must look through God's eyes; cannot take the attitude, My tongue is my own and I can use it as I please, but must speak only to the edification of those who hear us, and only such words as will please God.

The element of time must also be considered in connection with this turning process. The change from the old to the new life cannot be made in an instant. What we do must be done quickly, but even so it will take time. Life is short and uncertain, and no further progress can be made after the dread monster Death engulfs us.

Also this turning must be complete; a halfway work will not suffice, as we are told in Joel 2: 12, 13, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God. . ." Many people are attracted by sentimental religion. Such people feel that to make some great sacrifice or exhibit some striking external sign should be the right approach to gaining God's favor; but not so. "Rend your hearts and not your garments," is the divine command. To have the evil torn from our heart so we will lead a new life is what the

Eternal wants. John the Baptist expressed the true idea in his answer to the Pharisees and Sadducees who had come to be baptized by him, when he knew very well they were not sincere at heart: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" ["answerable to amendment of life"] (Matt. 3: 8).

The classic example of this turning to God was the apostle Paul, who when struck down by the light from heaven and hearing the voice of Jesus speaking to him was immediately obedient to the heavenly vision. His reverse turn was so complete that whereas he had been the chief persecutor of the followers of Christ, he now goes to them to humbly inquire the way of salvation; and whereas he had once sought to destroy the Church of the lowly Nazarene he now becomes its staunchest defender and most ardent missionary.

And even if at one time or other during our lives our fruits were such as to justify us in feeling we were well on our way to the height where we had turned to God with all our heart, we should have no assurance that the full reward would be our happy lot unless we maintained the same vigilance right through to the end. To slacken our pace is dangerous. To stop pulling and lay down the oars is positive proof we are drifting backward. The great Apostle himself recognized the need to continually press toward the goal. The impetus given him at the start of his Christian career by his remarkable conversion was not sufficient to carry him through to a successful finish without constant nurturing and amplifying his faith. He experienced a continual warfare. Even though his will to do good was paramount, yet he found in his members a condition that when he would do good, evil was ever present (Rom. 7: 21).

He states his formula for success in his letter to his Philippian brethren, written during his years of struggle and spiritual growth: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 13, 14). His statement in II Timothy 4: 8 reveals that at the close of his life he had reached that height, and that he fell asleep confident that a crown of rejoicing would be his at the day of the coming of Jesus.

Connected with turning to God is also the command to "seek mercy and judgment." These qualities, being the very basis upon which the Almighty's throne is founded, it is small wonder that He should require the same of all who would win His favor. Without these qualities our claim of turning to Him would be but a sham, an empty profession. To turn to Him we must keep mercy and judgment, and wait on our God continually. For our service to be wholehearted and continual precludes mere Sunday worship, it must control us through each waking moment of every day of the week, 365 days a year, rendering our bodies a living sacrifice.

To those who wait upon the Lord continually the gracious promise is that "they shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; . . . walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40: 31), their strength renewed so they can run and not be weary, walk and not faint; the barriers of mortality removed so they can mount up with power as angels. What a glorious reward for such a reasonable service!

Questions and Answers



A Subscriber in Rocanville, Sask., Canada writes: "Your magazine is a very good one for young Christians. We should always encourage them to search for themselves."

Then in a later paragraph he intimates that he disagrees with us on the status of the dead at Resurrection. The following are his own words: "The righteous dead are resurrected immortals, because their resurrection is after they are judged. And we do not know exactly when or what day the judgment is. Here is one of the mysteries of God's business."

Now we cannot agree with our friend's position as a whole, however we must agree with what he said about God judging dead people being a mystery. We find nothing in the Scripture to uphold the idea that the resurrection of the righteous dead is to be after they are judged. For the Almighty to plan to judge the dead while still dead would indeed be a mystery, and in the absence of anything in the Book to uphold such a belief it would be incongruous to accept it.

The Bible clearly reveals a day of judgment, and it certainly makes no inference to Judgment Day as being during the time God's servants are still sleeping. It is the revealed plan that Christ shall return to earth. Jesus Himself foretold it. He said: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again" (John 14:3). The angels reiterated it on the day of the Ascension: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Jesus re-confirmed it in His post-ascension message, the book of Revelation: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). And belief in the plan was attested to some thirty-seven times by the writers of the New Testament Epistles. Upon such good authority we should accept it without question.

The purpose of Christ's coming likewise is sharply outlined. He is to be Judge, Conqueror, and King. Let us canvass the revelations regarding His judgeship, also the time and place of the Judgment.

Second Timothy 4:1 reveals that He is to judge the "quick [living] and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." But in speaking of judging the "dead" he certainly does not infer that they will be judged while still dead. It is the resurrected dead that are indicated.

In II Cor. 5:10 Paul covers those amenable to judgment under the blanket term, "we." "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." How could dead people (who know not anything—Eccl 9:5) appear before Christ's judgment seat?

In Matt. 25:31-33 Jesus reveals first the time of the Judgment: it will be when He comes "in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Then He reveals the method of procedure "And before him shall be gathered [out of] all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." There is nothing "mysterious" about this projected plan, nor the slightest suggestion of men and

women being judged while still dead.

First Thessalonians 4:15 makes the point that the living and the dead shall all be in the same category when they stand before Christ. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [or go before] them which are asleep."

Upon surface reading Rev. 20:12, 13 might be construed to uphold the idea that the dead would be judged while still dead, but careful analysis does not bear that idea out. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." The sea "gave up" the dead which were in it, and death and hell, or the grave (margin), "delivered up" the dead which were in them. They were no longer dead. They had been resurrected, brought to the level of the living before being judged.

In Rom. 14:10 Paul was careful to specify that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." How could dead men and women stand? Who would even try to deny that the covenant-makers living when Christ comes will literally stand before the judgment seat, but there is no exception made between the living and the dead. All shall "stand" together.

From Zelienople, Pa., comes a question that has the writer "stumped," but who wouldn't be?

"Here is a question that has me stumped. If the just go to heaven after death, why a resurrection followed by Judgment Day?"

We agree heartily. The popular conception of one going to heaven to one's reward immediately at death, *versus* the Biblical teaching of a resurrection, judgment, and dispensing of the rewards at the last day when Christ returns, provides an incongruity so glaring as to stump any thinking man.

If the popular teaching were true it could be that Judgment Day would prove a day of extreme revealing. One who had been in a place of torment for a thousand years might discover that he should have been in Paradise, and *vice versa*. But let us not attribute any such folly to an All-wise Creator!

There are no grounds for the belief that one goes either to heaven or a place of torment at death. The Book speaks forthrightly: "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed *in the earth*: much more the wicked and the sinner" (Prov. 11:31).

The idea of people going to heaven at death is not founded on the Scriptures. In John 7:34 Jesus had in effect said to the Jews: "whither I go ye cannot come"; and in John 13:33 He said the same to His disciples: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." In John 3:13 Jesus had already made it plain to them that no one up to

(Continued on page 8)

Happiness and Joy

"My son, forget not my directions, keep in mind what I command; for that will bring you welfare, long days and happy life, Prov. 3: 1, 2, Moffatt.

Joy is something you harbor in your heart: it is nothing that you can search for and find without.

True happiness eludes its pursuer but automatically comes to those who pursue good.

One man fails to find happiness, though he spends a fortune and travels to the corners of the earth in search of it; another finds it in simple things around him, and in performing worthwhile tasks.

Empty pleasures, like balloons blown up to a point of bursting are of short duration.

Far deeper is the happiness found in simple joys than the most elaborate and costly amusements.

Happiness isn't an outer garment to put on or take off at will, but a quality of the soul.

There is no happiness apart from goodness.

True happiness is found in the individual soul, only when it is in accord with the All Soul.

By working too hard for a happier tomorrow you may miss the joys of today.

Store enough sunshine in the bright and happy days of life to see you through the dark and cloudy periods.

The joyless man has his mind centered on himself. The happy, contented man has his mind on others and is interested in their happiness as well as his own.

He who is constantly in pursuit of pleasure and amusement often passes happiness by without recognizing it.

Too often we are satisfied with the shadow, when we might have the substance. The substance of happiness is in service to God, genuine acts of kindness, service to our fellow man, search for greater truths, and looking upon the beauties of nature which God has bestowed upon us.

